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SUBJECT: EASTERN DRC NOTES -- APRIL 21

¶1. (U) The items contained in this report consist principally of spot information from various sources. This report is not exhaustive, nor can all the information contained therein be confirmed at this time.

Security Situation

¶2. (SBU) According to media reports, the FDLR attempted to burn up to 350 homes in Lufuo and Kisiki in North Kivu on April 17. MONUC confirmed the incident and said its forces arrived in time to extinguish some of the fires. The FDLR denied responsibility for the attack. A CNDP source, however, said the attack was likely an FDLR retaliatory attack for a FARDC operation the day before that reportedly captured a number of FDLR weapons.

¶3. (SBU) MONUC has confirmed several clashes between the FDLR and FARDC along the Bunyakiri-Hombo axis. A fire fight on April 10 left 4 FARDC and 6 FDLR dead. Six women (possibly FARDC wives) were abducted by the FDLR. The FDLR attacked FARDC in the same region on April 13, killing two government troops. MONUC confirmed reports that some 100 child soldiers (ages 13-15) had been recruited by the FARDC in the area. UN officials contacted local FARDC commanders, who were indifferent to their request to turn over the children. MONUC has referred the case to its child protection unit.

¶4. (SBU) MONUC is investigating reports that the FDLR have begun using anti-personnel mines (APM's) near Kamanyola, a village in South Kivu close to the juncture of the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi. If confirmed, the use of APM's would represent a dangerous shift in FDLR tactics.

Integration in the Kivus

¶5. (SBU) April 18 marked the final day for integration in North Kivu. All Congolese armed groups signatory to the March 2009 agreement (under the auspices UN mediator Obasanjo) agreed that they have now given up armed struggle. Any person (outside the FARDC and PNC) who is found with a weapon will henceforth be considered a bandit by GDRC forces. MONUC reports that militias remain active in Ituri in the area around Tchey and Poto Poto. The FARDC has undertaken some operations in the area with MONUC support.

¶6. (SBU) Integration continues at a slow pace in South Kivu. A total of 186 Shikito militia reported to integration centers, as well as 28 members of Zabuloni Mai Mai (with 4 weapons). MONUC received a request to transport an unknown number of Zabuloni from Uvira to the integration center in Luberizi.

LRA activity

¶7. (SBU) The LRA abducted seven civilians in Bitima, near the Sudanese border to the east of Doruma. MONUC reported that the

UPDF, which has an infantry brigade in the region, is pursuing the rebels.

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